Nathan Morse – February 29, 2010 – B Period

**CHAPTER 8 TEST / ESSAY**

Prompt: Discuss Washington’s Administration, with particular focus on his early challenges and accomplishments.

It was April 30, 1789 when George Washington took the oath of office. He was unanimously elected president. Not only would he be remembered for being the first leader of the United States, but also for having such an amazing and influential way of doing things. He had many issues that many say he couldn’t have handled any better.

As you can imagine, being the president isn’t easy. It was especially hard for Washington because he had to set precedents, or traditions, and he knew that he had to make good decisions so that there aren’t any bad precedents set. One of the biggest precedents he established was how people should address him. His vice president, John Adams, thought it should be “His Highness the President.” Washington decided to simply go with “Mr. President” as anything else would be too close to a monarchy.

Alexander Hamilton, the Secretary of Treasury, set some taxes on whiskey, a product that many farmers used in barter. They were very angry over these taxes and arose in a resistance. Soon they got violent. A huge mob of farmers burned down buildings and attacked tax collectors in a horrific act called the Whiskey Rebellion. Washington responded in the best way possible – he sent an army to the area. After that, the rebellion was crushed. Washington had just sent a very important message to the American people: if you don’t like a law, you must peacefully try to change it.

Another problem was that some Native Americans denied any U.S. authority over them. They even got help from Britain and Spain. Washington created many treaties with the Indians to help protect the Northwest Territory where they lived. However, many American settlers ignored the treaties and continued to live on lands owned by the Indians. Soon fighting broke out. Washington sent a huge army, which was massively defeated in a battle by the Wabash River. Soon, he sent another army, this time scoring a victory. The Battle of Fallen Timbers resulted in the Treaty of Greenville which gave the U.S. most of the Ohio lands.

In the late 1700s, the French Revolution began and many Americans cheered France for desiring the same freedoms the U.S. had. The only thing is, it started turning violent and many Americans started disapproving of this bloody time. When the British went to war with France, some Americans were for the British, some were for France. Washington was neutral and encouraged others to do so too. After a while the French sent Edmond Genet to recruit U.S. citizens to attack British ships. In turn, Washington signed the Proclamation of Neutrality, outlawing U.S. citizens to fight in the war and stopping French and British naval ships from entering American ports.

The British were enraged by the attacks the Americans did on them courtesy of France. They started using impressments and did their own version of attacking ships. Washington sent chief court justice John Jay to make a treaty with the British. That said that the British had to take all troops out of America, pay back all ship damages, and it allowed for Americans to trade with British colonies in the West Indies. Soon Spain got worried that this alliance may make the two countries rebel on them, but Washington sent Thomas Pinckney to make a treaty with the British. That allowed the U.S. to get a few beneficial gains.

Sadly, Washington said his farewell to the presidency after only two terms. This became a very big precedent, hinting to people of the future that it’s best to only be in office for 8 years. After his Farewell Address, he went home to Mount Vernon where he lived the rest of his days. From stopping a fierce rebellion to dealing with a tough foreign affair issue, Washington was perhaps one of the most influential presidents to ever lead America.

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